ready for the consideration of Government. Representations have often been made in this Assembly for the establishment of new police outposts and for the strengthening of staff in particular places. Government felt that the question should not be dealt with piecemeal but required a comprehensive study. An experienced officer of the department was accordingly deputed to examine the entire question of allocation.

Registration of Assurances.

15. You will see from the report of the Department of Registration that the pieces of social legislation affecting the Nair, the Ezhava and the Nanjinad Vellala communities, have brought about a considerable number of partitions of the property of long established joint families. There were, up to the end of 1103, 27,054 partition deeds of property to the value of Rs. 4·08 crores among Nairs. The corresponding figures were 8,888 for Rs. 1·15 crores among Ezhavas and 558 for Rs. 28·39 lakhs among Nanjinad Vellalas.

Joint Stock Companies.

16. The year witnessed a boom in company promotion. Eighty-five companies were registered during the year, of which 66 conducted banking and loan transactions. This is the largest number of banks on record started in any one particular year and their authorised capital was Rs. 96 lakhs. It is significant that the majority of these conducted *chitties*. It remains to be seen whether this rapid growth of small banking concerns is healthy and sound economically. The question of closer control over *chitties*, by revising the existing law on the subject, is engaging my attention.

Co-operative Societies.

17. The co-operative movement continues to spread. The number of societies increased from 1,555 to 1,688; the number of members from 150,932 to 177,824; and the working capital from Rs. 33·63 lakhs to Rs. 42·59 lakhs. The majority of these societies continued to do credit business alone. The number of societies of the backward and depressed classes has also increased with a corresponding increase in the number of members and in the amount of working capital. It is noteworthy that there are 3 societies whose membership is confined to women alone and that the total number of women members in all the societies together rose from 15,687 in 1102 to 19,507 in 1103. The growing popularity of the movement among women is full of promise for the good of the country. The time has come for a thorough examination of the working of co-operative societies in the State so as to guide it on sound and healthy lines calculated to help the economic rehabilitation of the masses.

Public Works.

18. The total expenditure incurred by the Public Works Department during 1103 was Rs. 37·45 lakhs, of which communications absorbed Rs. 21·54 lakhs and buildings Rs. 6·80 lakhs. The expenditure on buildings was the highest on record during the past quinquennium.

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The English High School, Nagercoil, the new Women's College, Trivandrum, the extension of the chemical laboratory attached to the College of Science, are some of the buildings which were completed or were nearing completion at the end of the year. The outlay on communications is in pursuance of the avowed policy of Government to improve and develop communications as much as possible. The expenditure under this head was also the highest during the past quinquennium, and represents about 9 per cent of the total general revenues of the State. The inadequacy of communications in Central and North Travancore, which was the subject of repeated representations in several sessions of the Assembly, has been appreciably remedied during the past few years. Last year I referred to the importance of the Quilon-Arur road *via* Alleppey and Shertallai, and of the Pallivasal-Neriamangalam road. The first road has been completed, establishing a direct route from the Cape to the Cochin frontier connecting Alleppey and Shertallai which were long inaccessible by land. Substantial progress has also been made in the construction of the ghat road which when completed will make Munnar accessible by a route lying entirely within the State, and will appreciably facilitate trade and cultivation. The length of communications which was 4,769 miles in 1101, increased to 4,973 miles at the end of last year. With the increasing demand for more roads and with a view to co-ordinate the demands, Government propose to organise a Roads and Waterways Board for each P. W. Division and a Central Board for the whole State in each of which representatives of the people will be associated The organisation of these boards will result in a settled roads and canals programme and will remove the inter-divisional competition in the Legislative Council and in this Assembly. The rules regulating the constitution and working of these boards will shortly be published for public criticism. The question of maintaining bridges has received the careful attention of the Chief Engineer. It has been found necessary to test the strength of and examine the suitability of all the existing bridges to stand the strain of modern motor traffic; and a special staff has been sanctioned for the purpose. The Trivandrum water supply scheme was re-investigated and re-designed during the year. The re-alignment of the line for the main supply was completed and the plans and estimates have been prepared. Cast iron pipes of 30" and 35" diameter are now arriving. A new road for the transport of the pipes, etc., to the source of the water supply is nearing completion. The scheme for the Trivandrum electric supply has become an accomplished fact. The lines now cover a length of 14 miles and there remain 12 miles more to complete. The whole work was carried out with commendable promptitude. Work is proceeding on the Neendakara bridge and it is expected that this important connecting link will be ready for traffic by August next.

Railways.

19. The lands required for the extension of the railway to the heart of Trivandrum have almost all been acquired and handed over to the Railway Engineer. The work is making visible progress.

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